

Message Text

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INFO RUESZC/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE 3762

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 138493

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION KAMPALA, JULY 14, FROM SECSTATE RPTD
TO YOU:

QUOTE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CASE, US, UG, ETRN

SUBJECT: DETENTION OF PCVS

REF: (A) KAMPALA 2283; (B) STATE 136157

1. ACTING ASST SECY ROSS CALLED IN UGANDAN CHARGE
MWANGAGUHUNGA MORNING OF JULY 13 TO DISCUSS EVENTS OF LAST
WEEKEND AND MAKE DEMARCHE ALONG LINES STATE REFTEL. ROSS
EXPRESSED THANKS TO MWANGAGUHUNGA FOR HIS COOPERATION IN
PROMPTLY CONVEYING OUR VIEWS AND CONCERN TO FONMIN OVER
WEEKEND. SAID WE HAD NOW INSTRUCTED OUR CHARGE TO SEE
ACTING FONMIN ETIANG TO DELIVER NOTE SETTING FORTH OUR
VIEWS AND REQUESTING EXPLANATION. ROSS GAVE MWANGAGUHUNGA
AIDE MEMOIRE SIMILAR TO NOTE AND EMPHASIZED OUR CONCERN
THAT DETENTION OF VOLUNTEERS, ESPECIALLY DURING FIRST DAY
AND NIGHT IN AIRPORT TRANSIT LOUNGE, WAS CONTRARY TO
ACCEPTED PRINCIPLES OF STATE CONDUCT AND TREATMENT OF
OTHER STATES; NATIONALS.

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2. ONE ASPECT WHICH ESPECIALLY CONCERNED US, ROSS CONTINUED,

WAS GOU'S FAILURE TO ASK OUR EMBASSY FOR CLARIFICATION OF SITUATION AND VERIFICATION OF PASSENGERS' IDENTIFY AS PCVS OR TO GET IN TOUCH WITH US HERE VIA UGANDAN EMBASSY. HAD GOU DONE SO, DEPT OR EMBASSY OFFICIALS COULD HAVE PROMPTLY CONFIRMED PASSENGERS WERE PCVS EN ROUTE TO BUKAVU AT

REQUEST OF GOZ TRAVELLING VIA BUJUMBURA, WHERE AIR ZAIRE CHARTER AWAITED THEM. EVEN ONCE THESE FACTS WERE MADE KNOWN, GOU DID NOT HEED THEM. JUDGING FROM THIS ATTITUDE ON PART GOU, WE COULD ONLY ASSUME THAT AMCITS AND USG VIEWED WITH SUSPICION IN UGANDA, WHICH IS REGRETTABLE IN LIGHT OF OUR HISTORY OF GOOD AND FRUITFUL RELATIONS. EVEN THOUGH CIRCUMSTANCES MADE IT NECESSARY FOR US TO WITHDRAW OUR PCV CONTINGENT LAST FALL AND THE AID STAFF MORE RECENTLY, WE HARBOR NO HOSTILITY TOWARD UGANDA AND ARE ENGAGED IN NO ACTIVITIES INIMICAL TO ITS GOVERNMENT OR PEOPLE. ON CONTRARY, OUR OBJECTIVE HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO TRY ACHIEVE GOOD, NORMAL RELATIONS.

3. MWANGAGUHUNGA RESPONDED HE WAS GLAD INCIDENT ENDED WITHOUT HARM TO ANYONE. SAID HIS INFORMATION IS THAT PLANE WAS SUPPOSED TO MAKE REFUELING STOP IN NAIROBI BUT BAD WEATHER CAUSED SWITCH TO ENTEBBE. SAID WE HAVE TO PUT OURSELVES IN GENERAL AMIN'S SHOES, ESPECIALLY AFTER INCIDENT LAST FALL WHEN EAST AFRICAN AIRWAYS DC-9 WAS COMMANDEERED BY REBELS IN TANZANIA PARTICIPATING IN INVASION OF UGANDA. IN LIGHT OF THESE FACTORS, GENERAL AMIN'S SUSPICIONS WERE HEIGHTENED WHEN HE LEARNED OF VC-10 IN ENTEBBE WITH AMERICANS ABOARD BOUND FOR BURUNDI. ONCE PLANE AND BAGGAGE OF PASSENGERS WERE SEARCHED, AND ONCE AMIN RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM MOBUTU, AMIN ALLOWED PCVS TO CONTINUE THEIR JOURNEY. GOU IS WELL AWARE OF CHICAGO CONVENTION BUT THIS WAS QUESTION OF NATIONAL SECURITY.

4. FACT IS, MWANGAGUHUNGA ASSERTED, OUR RELATIONS ARE NOT AS BAD AS US NEWSPAPERS STATE AND HE SAID HE HOPEFUL THEY WILL IMPROVE. HE CLAIMED THAT AMIN'S
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STATEMENT THAT US HAS INTRODUCED 22 SECTS INTO UGANDA IN PAST TWO YEARS WAS NOT MEANT TO BE HOSTILE TO AMERICA AND THAT THERE HAD EVEN BEEN PUBLIC DEFENSE OF SOME OF THESE SECTS' ACTIVITIES BY MINED ADIMOLA. HE REITERATED HIS HOPE THAT RELATIONS WILL IMPROVE VERY SOON.

5. ROSS REITERATED THAT WHAT STILL TROUBLED US WAS THAT DESPITE FACT AMERICAN CITIZENS INVOLVED PRESIDENT

AMIN DID NOT BOTHER INCLUDE US AMONG NATIONS FROM WHOM HE SOUGHT CONFIRMATION OF PCVS BONA FIDES. WE WOULD HOPE THAT IN FUTURE, IF GOU RECEIVES REPORTS ALLEGING AMERICANS IN UGANDA ARE ENGAGED IN SUSPICIOUS OR IMPROPER ACTIVITIES, GOU WILL CONSULT US OFFICIALS PROMPTLY WITH VIEW TO VERIFYING FACTS BEFORE REACTING.

B. WE HAD NOT RECEIVED KAMPALA REFTTEL PRIOR SEEING MWANGAGUHUNGA, AND IT APPEARED THAT HE WAS NOT AWARE EITHER OF AMIN'S LATEST ASSERTION THAT HE IS NO LONGER AGAINST US OR ANYONE ELSE. LATER SAME DAY, HOWEVER, MWANGAGUHUNGA CALLED DEPT TO SAY HE HAD LEARNED OF AMIN'S REMARKS IN CALL TO KAMPALA TO INFORM FONMIN OF OUR MEETING AND THAT CHARGE KEELEY HAD ALREADY SEEN FONMIN OFFICIALS.

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